

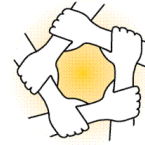
PRESS RELEASE

For more information:

Erica McNamara, RCASA Director

15 Union Street * Reading, MA 01867

Email: emcnamara@ci.reading.ma.us Phone: 781.942.6793



**Reading
Coalition
Against
Substance
Abuse**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEET “MOLLY”: THE REAL STORY BEHIND MDMA AND ECSTASY

Reading, MA- September 4, 2013

Due to recent media coverage about two drug overdoses and a drug-related death at the House of Blues in Boston, RCASA has received inquiries about “molly”. In 2012, the Reading Police Department and Reading Coalition Against Substance Abuse (RCASA) began seeing and hearing evidence that a new formulation of ecstasy known as “molly” was being consumed in Reading. The Reading Police Department Detectives Division has been actively working on cases related to this substance to intervene and reduce the supply of this substance. RCASA has focused on education and prevention.

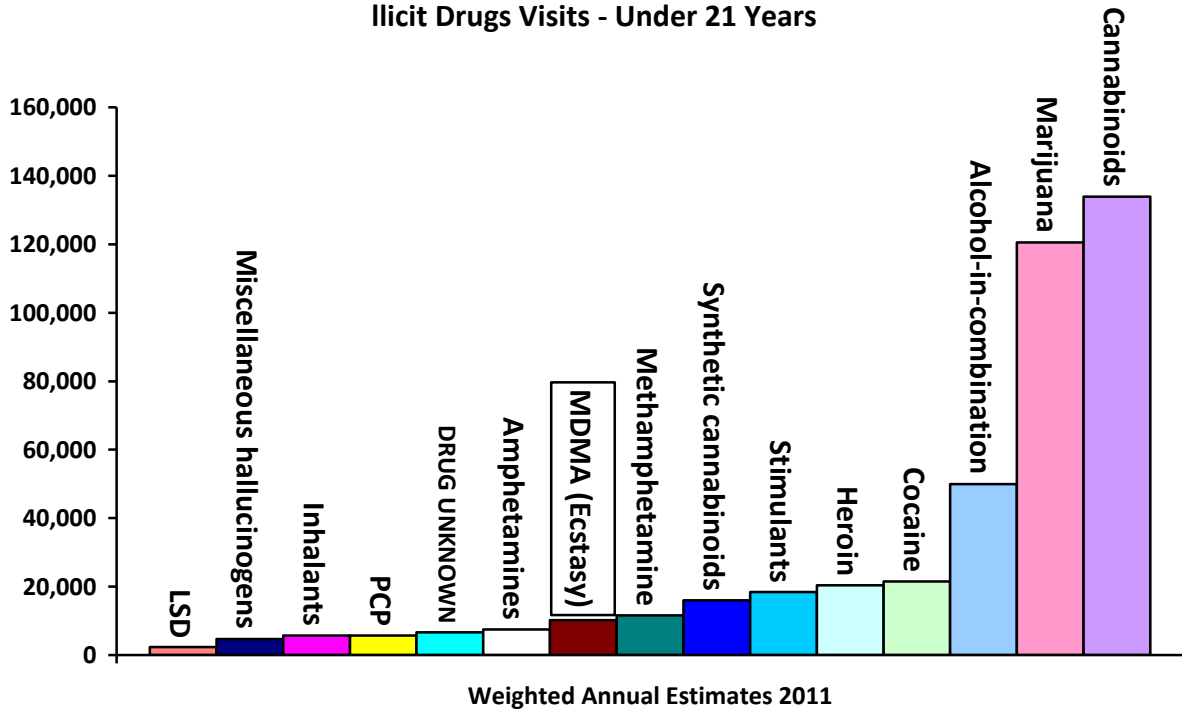
The term “molly”, which is short for molecule, refers to the more potent form of MDMA or Ecstasy. According to the National Institute of Drug Abuse, “Ecstasy” and “Molly” are slang terms for MDMA, short for 3, 4 methylenedioxymethamphetamine. Other slang terms that are used include “E,” “XTC,” “X,” “Adam,” “hug,” “beans,” “clarity,” “lover's speed,” and “love drug.”



The **National Institute of Drug Abuse** describes how MDMA impacts the body below:

- For most people, a “hit” of MDMA lasts for 3 to 6 hours. Once the pill is swallowed, it takes only about 15 minutes for MDMA to enter the bloodstream and reach the brain. About 45 minutes later, the person experiences MDMA's “high.” That’s when the drug is at its peak.
- People who use MDMA might feel very alert, or “hyper,” at first. Some lose a sense of time and experience other changes in perception, such as an enhanced sense of touch. Others experience negative effects right away. They may become anxious and agitated. Sweating or chills may occur, and people may feel faint or dizzy.
- MDMA can also cause muscle tension, nausea, blurred vision, and increased heart rate and blood pressure. Forceful clenching of the teeth can occur, and individuals at clubs have been known to chew on pacifiers to relieve some of the tension.
- Even if a person takes only one pill, the side effects of MDMA—including feelings of sadness, anxiety, depression, and memory difficulties—can last for several days to a week (or longer in people who use MDMA regularly).
- MDMA was involved in 10,176 emergency department visits in the U.S. in 2011.

National Estimates of Drug-related Emergency Dept. Visits Illicit Drugs Visits - Under 21 Years



Source: <http://www.samhsa.gov/data/DAWN.aspx>

In Reading, **five percent of high school age youth reported MDMA use in 2011**. Of the teens that reported MDMA use, 26 students reported using the drug at least 1-2 times; 8 students (3-9 times); and 3 students (10+ times). The local rate of use is lower than both the state rate (6%) and the national rate (8%). The most frequently misused substances by local teens are Alcohol, Marijuana, and Tobacco.

What are we doing at the local level to reduce MDMA use?

- Environmental strategies used by RCASA focus on reducing supply and demand.
- Reading Police are actively pursuing MDMA supply sources and illegal activity. They also work with RCASA to refer juveniles charged with substance-related crimes to a diversion program, which include education, community service, and referrals to necessary services.
- Reading Public Schools implemented a comprehensive Chemical Health Policy in 2012, holding students accountable for substance misuse that occurs in or out of school.
- Reading Police and the School Department work collaboratively to conduct random K-9 drug searches at Reading Memorial High School.
- Reading Police provides a full-time School Resource Officer (SRO) at Reading Memorial High School. The SRO works closely with the middle and elementary schools.
- Reading Public Schools teaches about MDMA and all other drug classes at the middle and high school levels using the district's comprehensive health education curriculum in grades 7, 9, and 11.

- Elementary educators are piloting a new prevention program that readies students for further substance abuse education at the middle school level.
- RCASA Board Leaders were educated about MDMA and other synthetic forms of drugs at their June meeting. The Board includes representatives from 12 sectors of the community.
- RCASA shared MDMA and other synthetics info through a recent newsletter.
- RCASA Youth Leaders studied this issue and developed a presentation for the **RCASA Annual Meeting on Thursday September 26, 2013 from 7-9 p.m. at Reading Memorial High School.**

According to Sophia Kalogeris, RCASA Board Member and Youth Crew Leader shared, *"synthetics including "molly" are a subject that we learned a lot about this past summer. Our group was surprised to learn about some of the side effects of these drugs. It's important that more youth get involved and learn about preventing further substance abuse."*



What can you do?

1. Send a quick text.
 - ✓ Type the word **READINGPD** along with the tip to 847411 (tip411) to report underage drinking or drug activity in Reading.
2. Get connected to RCASA,
 - ✓ Sign up for our newsletter, email jdeangelis@ci.reading.ma.us
 - ✓ Attend an event
 - ✓ Contact Erica McNamara, MPH, Director at [781-942-6793](tel:781-942-6793)
3. If you are a teen,
 - ✓ get involved with the RCASA Student Club or Youth Crew.
 - ✓ Educate yourself!
 - ✓ Email Julianne DeAngelis at jdeangelis@ci.reading.ma.us for more info.
4. If you are a parent,
 - ✓ Learn more about substance abuse prevention, visit <http://bit.ly/VL355V>



Resources:

RCASA Newsletter <http://conta.cc/1dmCJfF>

RCASA Website <http://www.edline.net/pages/ReadingPublicSchools/Community/RCASA>

National Institute on Drug Abuse <http://teens.drugabuse.gov/>